



Greetings!

Welcome to the Gateway to the West and the birthplace of the Mercury and Gemini spacecraft: Saint Louis! It is truly our honor to be hosting the Pleiades National Planetarium Conference, bringing together GLPA, GPPA, MAPS, PPA, RMPA, SEPA, SWAP, and even some of our friends from the IPS community around the world. We are excited to be bringing together planetarians from across the United States to meet, share ideas and best practices, making this unique community of planetarians even stronger than before!

Such a unique gathering of our community deserves a unique experience, and we have a stellar conference planned! Our host institution, the James S. McDonnell Planetarium at the Saint Louis Science Center, is located in beautiful Forest Park, named best urban park in the United States two years running. Forest Park is home to four of the five Zoological Park and Museum District institutions (which you will have time to explore) as well as gorgeous fall colors as the leaves change in October. The Saint Louis Science Center spans across Interstate 64, with the McDonnell Planetarium in Forest Park on the north side and the OMNIMAX® Theater and other exciting exhibits on the south side, offering a large and distinctive campus.

Our conference hotel is the Airport Renaissance, which once was a favorite place for the Mercury 7 astronauts to stay when they would come to Saint Louis to visit their spacecraft. Much of the conference will also be held at the hotel, with complimentary shuttle service between the hotel and McDonnell Planetarium, allowing you more time to network and get to know new colleagues. If you would like to drive your own car, complimentary parking is available as well.

The James S. McDonnell Planetarium boasts a 24-meter dome, brand new seats just in time for the conference, mats to lie down on the floor if you prefer, and a unique flow between the exhibits and our Orthwein StarBay Theater. At the center of the StarBay is the heart of our dome sweet dome: the ever impressive ZEISS UNIVERSARIUM Modell IX star projector, the only of its kind in the Americas to have efficient LED lamps, making the stars even brighter than before. We are excited to share our realistic stars with you and encourage you all to participate in *Constellation Shootout* during our Constellation Cocktails event!

You are also going to want to plan time for the Mini-LIPS pre-conference workshop and the post-conference trip to Cahokia Mounds to check out Woodhenge, Native American Archaeoastronomy, and the Mounds!

Meet us in Saint Louis for the Pleiades National Planetarium Conference, and be a part of history as we gather all of the planetarium organizations in the United States for professional development and the exchange of ideas, engaging workshops, interesting papers, exciting speakers, and the opportunity to meet more of your colleagues than ever before!

Until then, may your skies be clear and your domes full of stellar wonder.

Best,

A blue ink signature of Bert Vescolani.

Bert Vescolani  
President and Chief Executive Officer  
Saint Louis Science Center

A blue ink signature of Anna Green.

Anna Green  
Planetarium Manager  
James S. McDonnell Planetarium  
Saint Louis Science Center